

REMARKS

Claims 37 and 87 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Drori et al. (U.S. Patent 6,555,996).

Claim 37 recites "first and second bulk impedance devices each of an approximately same impedance greater than an impedance of the first string". (Emphasis added.)

In contrast, Drori et al. teach that each of resistors 62_k [in the resistor stack 60] has a value substantially equal to a value of R_s ohms". (Drori et al., Col. 4, lines 30-32.) In addition, Drori et al. teach that each of the variable resistance networks 20 and 40 "varies between zero ohms and a value of R_p ohms". (Drori et al., Col. 4, lines 7-15.) Drori et al. also teach that "each of variable resistance networks 20 and 40 has a plurality of resistance values which are spaced substantially equally from one another by an increment ΔR_p ", wherein ΔR_p is necessarily smaller than R_p . (Drori et al., Col. 4, lines 58-62.) Finally, Drori et al. teach that "the value of R_p is substantially equal to the quantity $(R_s - \Delta R_p)$ ". (Drori et al., Col. 4, lines 65-66.)

Consequently, Drori et al. explicitly teaches that the resistance value of R_p is less than the resistance value of R_s (by value ΔR_p). Because Drori et al. teaches that the resistance value R_p of variable resistance networks 20 and 40 is less than the resistance value R_s of a single resistor in resistor stack 60, Drori et al. necessarily fail to teach "first and second bulk impedance devices each of an approximately same impedance greater than an impedance of the first string" as recited by Claim 37.

For this reason, Claim 37 is not anticipated by Drori et al.

Claim 87 recites "the first and second bulk impedance devices having an approximately same impedance greater than an impedance of the first string". (Emphasis added.) Claim 87 is therefore not anticipated by Drori et al. for the same reasons as Claim 37.

Claim 78 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Drori et al. in view of Stanescu et al. (Published U.S. Patent Application US 2004/0108844 A1).

The present U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 10/660,222 and Published U.S. Patent Application US 2004/0108844 were, at the time the invention of U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 10/660,222 was made, owned by Catalyst Semiconductor, Inc.

It is therefore inappropriate to use Published U.S. Patent Application US 2004/0108844 A1 (Stanescu et al.) to reject claims of the present Application.

For this reason, Claim 78 is allowable over Drori et al. in view of Stanescu et al.

Claims 38-68, 79-85 and 88-113 have been objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim. However, the Examiner has indicated that these claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Because Applicant believes that base Claims 37 and 87 are allowable for reasons provided above, Applicant is not amending Claims 38-68 or 88-104 at this time.

Applicant notes the allowance of Claims 69-77 and 86.

CONCLUSION

Claims 37-113 are pending in the present application. Claims 38-68, 79-85 and 88-113 are allowable and Claims 69-77 and 86 are allowed. Reconsideration and allowance of Claims 37, 78 and 87 is requested. If there are any questions, please telephone the undersigned at (925) 895-3545 to expedite prosecution of this case.

Respectfully submitted,



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